

WIRTHLIN WORLDWIDE

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WITH Southern Coalition for Advanced Transportation

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TELEPHONE

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DATE May 31, 2000

PAGES [INCLUDING COVER] 6

SUBJECT ADVERTISING RESEARCH TOPLINE RESULTS



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The following provides a topline summary of consumer responses to the advertising research conducted on May 25, 2000.

As a reminder, three "triads" (groups of three consumers) were conducted, each lasting 1 _ hours. All respondents were people who are at least moderately concerned about air quality and traffic congestion. They represented diverse age, gender and ethnic groups and a variety of commuting situations.

Overall Assessment

- Target consumers respond most positively to the "Cold Hard Facts" campaign (which emphasizes the time wasted in traffic) and "How do you deal with traffic?" (which shows how people distract themselves in traffic). In addition, both groups responded to these two campaigns in a way that reflected the strategy developed from the earlier "VISTA" research. Of the two campaigns, "Cold Hard Facts" better communicates the stress reduction available from using alternatives to SOV transportation.
- However, response to the "Auto Addicts Support Group" was very mixed and not particularly positive.

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- There is valuable learning to be gained from the responses to each of the campaigns:

- o "Cold Hard Facts" presents the core problem most dramatically. The contrast between the problem and solution make it easy for people to understand the point it is making. People easily empathize with the image of gridlocked traffic, because they have all experienced it.
 - Additionally, when people were asked to rate the commercial on a series of statements reflecting the VISTA strategy, they were more likely to say the statements applied "to a very great degree." The other two commercials generated lower levels of agreement (see attached summary of statement ratings).
 - There is a slight risk that too harsh a portrayal of the traffic problem can be a turn-off to people. Some people mentioned that they would find it stressful to watch the commercial if they've just finished their daily commute and would be inclined to ignore it.
- o "How do you deal with traffic?" appeals to people because it uses humor to make its point: that people who are stuck in traffic are desperate to amuse themselves. People like the campaign because they can identify with the situations that were shown (and most could offer other humorous things they've seen people do while stuck in traffic).
 - The potential risk with this campaign is that the humor in the commercial will reduce the contrast between the severity of the problem and the appeal of alternatives to SOV use as a solution.
- o "Auto Addicts Support Group" was less effective than the other campaign approaches because people:
 - Found the situation difficult to identify with,
 - Felt the idea of being addicted to automobiles stretched reality,
 - Found the "auto addict" shown in the commercial concept personally unappealing,
 - Didn't view the solution offered (carpooling) as the most obvious solution to the problem of spending too much time on alone in one's own car.

CONSIDERATIONS

In moving forward to make a decision on which campaign to run, we recommend that SCAT and The Morrison Agency consider the following:

1. "COLD HARD FACTS"

- A. Strengths: The campaign's strength is the contrast it draws between the problem of traffic congestion and the solution of alternatives to SOV use. People "get" the message very clearly.
 - B. Weakness: Over multiple exposures, some people may start to disregard the commercial, because they find the message too strong.
 - C. Challenge: How to keep the message fresh over time.
2. "How do you deal with traffic?"
- A. Strengths: People like the humor in the commercial and identify with the situations. It offers a virtually limitless pool of situations, so keeping the campaign interesting and new is not a problem.
 - B. Weaknesses: The use of humor can reduce the contrast between the severity of the problem and the appeal of the solution. Without that reminder, will people be as likely to take action?
 - C. Challenge: To avoid appearing as though being stuck in traffic is fun. The campaign needs to clearly illustrate that people are indeed desperate to distract themselves from the frustration they feel.
3. Given its relatively weak reception, in comparison to the other two campaigns, "Auto Addicts Support Group" does not appear to be a strong candidate for further development.

“How do you deal with Traffic?”

-Number of Respondents- -Score-

	Applies to a very great degree	Applies to some degree	Does not apply at all	Overall Score*
The commercial communicates that it's important to use public transportation in order to reduce congestion.	5	2	2	19
The commercial communicates that if I use public transportation I get more control of my time.	2	4	3	14
The commercial implies that if I use public transportation I will have more time to spend doing things I enjoy.	3	4	2	17
The commercial makes me more likely to consider taking public transportation once in a while instead of driving my own car.	6	3	0	24
The commercial reminds that wasting time in traffic takes away from my quality of life.	5	2	2	19
The commercial brings to mind that one person can make a difference when it comes to reducing congestion in the Atlanta area.	2	4	3	14
The commercial communicates that I will save money if I use public transportation.	0	2	7	4
The commercial reassures me that I can make a difference even if I only use public transportation occasionally.	5	3	1	21
The commercial communicates that I will save time by using public transportation.	3	4	2	17
The commercial communicates that if I take advantage of public transportation instead of driving my car then I will experience less stress.	3	4	2	17
The commercial communicates that I will improve increase my productivity by using public transportation.	1	3	5	9

SCORING: A weight of “3” is given to those who say the statement applies “to a very great degree” and a weight of “2” is given to those who say it applies “to some degree”.

Number agreeing that statement applies “to a very great degree” x 3

+

Number agreeing that statement applies “to some degree” x 2

SCORE

“Cold Hard Facts”

-Number of Respondents- -Score-

	Applie s to a very great degre e	Applie s to some degre e	Does not apply at all	Overal l Score *
The commercial communicates that it is important to telecommute to reduce traffic congestion in Atlanta.	6	3	0	24
The commercial communicates that telecommuting will improve my own productivity.	5	4	0	23
The commercial communicates that if I telecommute instead of driving my car then I will experience less stress.	7	1	1	23
The commercial reminds me of how good it can feel to not have to fight traffic.	9	0	0	27
The commercial communicates that telecommuting saves time.	8	1	0	26
The commercial communicates that I will be able to spend more time doing the things I like to do if I telecommute.	4	5	0	22
The commercial communicates that when I telecommute, I gain more control of my time.	6	3	0	24
The commercial reminds me of the peace of mind I feel when I am in control of my time.	2	7	0	20
The commercial increases my interest in telecommuting.	5	3	1	21

SCORING: A weight of “3” is given to those who say the statement applies “to a very great degree” and a weight of “2” is given to those who say it applies “to some degree”.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Number agreeing that statement applies “to a very great degree”} \times 3 \\
 + \\
 \text{Number agreeing that statement applies “to some degree”} \times 2 \\
 \hline
 \text{SCORE}
 \end{array}$$

“Auto Addicts Support Group”

	-Number of Respondents-			-Score-
	Applies to a very great degree	Applies to some degree	Does not apply at all	Overall Score*
The commercial communicates that carpooling will improve my own productivity.	2	2	5	10
The commercial communicates that if I carpool instead of driving my car then I will experience less stress.	4	4	1	20
The commercial communicates that carpooling saves time.	2	3	4	12
The commercial communicates that I will have more time to do the things I like to do if I carpool.	2	3	4	12
The commercial communicates that when I carpool, I gain more control of my time.	2	3	4	12
The commercial reminds me of the quality of life I have when I am in control of my time.	0	4	5	8
The commercial increases my interest in carpooling.	1	6	2	15

SCORING: A weight of “3” is given to those who say the statement applies “to a very great degree” and a weight of “2” is given to those who say it applies “to some degree”.

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Number agreeing that statement applies “to a very great degree”} \times 3 \\
 &+ \\
 &\text{Number agreeing that statement applies “to some degree”} \times 2 \\
 &\text{SCORE}
 \end{aligned}$$